

**2004-2005**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD**  
**TO**  
**GOVERNOR MARK R. WARNER**

**AUGUST 5, 2005**

**VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In its second year, the Virginia Asian Advisory Board (VAAB) continued its high pace of activities to build bridges between state government and the Asian American communities in Virginia. The Board certainly accomplished the main goal of bringing the state government and Our Asian American communities to a closer understanding of one another.

More than 300 Asian American community leaders participated in the outreach efforts organized by and in partnership with VAAB throughout this one year period. These communities repeatedly raised concerns about domestic issues, in particular, education, limited language proficiency, and fairness and diversity related to employment and equal access to business opportunities. The many research and survey efforts conducted by VAAB's three committees consistently brought valuable inputs from the Asian American communities and the state governments in Virginia. The information derived from these outreaches was basis for many of the recommendations put forth in this report.

Our local and state elected officials attended various VAAB functions and meetings with informative layout of government processes and available state social services, and many became strong advocates of Asian American issues. In addition, regional economic development officers were invited to share with the board on domestic and international business development processes. In all, the VAAB has begun to take an active role in introducing and bringing about understanding of state and local run services to the Asian American communities.

VAAB organized two highly successful and visible networking events that brought about closer relationship between Asian American communities and business leaders, and on a non-partisan basis, our state and local officials. These events created first of many opportunities and interests for more Asian Americans to become involved in civic activities.

From these meetings and events, fact gathering, and analysis undertaken by the three committees of VAAB (Civic and Cultural committee, Education and Learning committee, and Business and Trade committee), the Board narrowed down the priority issues to the following recommendations:

1. In the Education and Learning areas, the Board's recommendations span all levels of education: pre K-12, College and Advanced Studies, and Community and Adult Education.

- (I) In the pre K-12 Public Education, the Boards finds inadequate attention has been placed on the students who scored at either ends of the spectrum while the average performance of Virginia K-12 students improved on all subjects in recent years. There is a lack of Asian language electives offered at the public school. Furthermore, many textbook topics on Asia and Asian studies lack balance and perspectives and contain incorrect information.

VAAB recommends that the Commonwealth (1) allocate adequate resources to develop, improve, and sustain the needed remedial education programs and to expand ESL teacher training; (2) increase budget significantly to broaden

the state supported public school-based gifted/specialty programs; (3) offer a special grant to initiate Asian language courses in public schools where there is demand, in order to enable the students to communicate and compete in a global environment in the future; (4) require the Commonwealth's Textbook and Selection and Adoption Committee to request all competing publishers (vendors) to submit textbook drafts for review and input by Virginia experts, educators, and parents on topics relating to Asia and the Asian studies; (5) designate the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May as Asian American Heritage Education week in Public School to enhance the understanding of and appreciation for contributions made by Asian Americans and Asian cultures to this country.

- (II) In College Education and Advanced Studies, the Board finds disparity in hiring at the top administrative positions and in salary compensation when it comes to faculty members of Asian heritage. VAAB recommends that the Commonwealth (1) allot budget and require The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to collect statistical data on faculty salary and administrative appointments by rank, race, gender, ethnicity; (2) establish scholarships for student college/university exchange programs for both international and Virginia students; (3) provide funds to allow international scholars to teach or perform research at Virginia colleges/universities in order to benefit and advance Virginia academic and research institutions.
- (III) In Community and Adult Educational Programs, the Board recommends the Commonwealth to recognize the important values of diversity and multiculturalism, and carry-out the training regularly in the public schools and the state executive branch agencies.

2. With the Civic and Cultural committee's work, the Board made recommendations on issues in three areas:

- (I) In the area of Limited English Proficiency, VAAB urges the Governor to fully implement HJR 71 recommendations and require the related State agencies work together to provide the needed service and support to the Asian American communities.
- (II) In the area of civil participation in Virginia Government, VAAB recommends the Governor to form a task force addressing the obstacles that prohibit the Asian Americans' involvement into the political process. And to request election monitors from the US Department of Justice Civil Rights Division to assure Asian Americans may exercise their voting right without being hindered by the language barrier.
- (III) In order to support the Board's work effectively, VAAB urges the Governor appropriately consider a working budget to allow the necessary expense and sufficient staff support.

3. With the work of Business & Trade committee, the Board made recommendations in two areas:

- (I) The committee urges the Governor to (1) strengthen and establish programs to enhance the economic viability of minority-owned businesses (including, but not limited to, Asian American businesses) that include training on public as well as private procurement opportunities, a mentoring-protégé program, and looking into ways to simplify the procurement process. (2) In addition, the procurement program needs to be monitored and evaluated to assess the real economic impact on the Asian American businesses through the State's procurement program.
  
- (II) VAAB was proud that Governor Warner followed through with our recommendation from the 2004 report and we request that more Virginia Trade Missions are planned to foster and strengthen the economic ties with Asian countries. In addition, the Commonwealth should continuously evaluate what incentives are offered to foreign investors so that we remain competitive.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board (VAAB) is a governmental entity of the Commonwealth of Virginia that serves as a formal liaison between the Commonwealth government and the Asian American communities in the Commonwealth. VAAB consists of community activists, entrepreneurs, educators, health care providers, businesspeople and public servants from several of the main regions of Virginia and nearly all Asian ethnic groups. Together we represent the rich diversity of cultures and talents in the Commonwealth's Asian American community.

Pursuant to Section 2.2-2450 of the Code of Virginia, this Annual Report is submitted to Governor Mark R. Warner as a summary of the Virginia Asian Advisory Board's activities from July 2004 to June 2005. The Report includes recommendations for the Governor and executive branch agencies to consider and adopt in order to enhance the level of participation of Asian Americans in the Commonwealth's programs and services.

Our recommendations are developed and organized through the work of three subcommittees: Education and Learning; Civic and Cultural; and Business and Trade. Each subcommittee led by its subcommittee chair, conduct independent research, surveys, and evaluations. The board unanimously approved the recommendations submitted by the committees.

This is the final VAAB report of this administration. Through our activities of the past two years, we have established a bridge between the State Government and the Asian American community in Virginia. We have participated in numerous community activities, established an organizational structure, set up a web page (in which all meeting minutes and reports are published), conducted research into the needs of the Asian community, and produced two annual reports with recommendations for the Governor. We encourage future Boards to strengthen the level of activity and to build upon our efforts to integrate the Asian community into mainstream public discourse. We appreciate this opportunity to have served the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Asian community.

## **II. VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD**

### **A. Background and History**

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board ("VAAB" or "Board") was established by statute in 2001 during Governor James S. Gilmore's administration. Delegate Leo C. Wardrup (R-Virginia Beach) introduced House bill HB2859 in January 2001 to create a board to advise the Governor "on ways to improve economic and cultural links between the Commonwealth and Pacific Rim nations, with a focus on the areas of commerce and trade, art and education, and general government." Governor Mark R. Warner made the first appointment to 16 members initially on June 12, 2003. An additional member was appointed shortly to make a 17 members' Board.

## **B. Authorizing Statute**

While the original intent of the 2001 authorizing statute was broad in its jurisdictional charge to VAAB, many members in the Asian American community believed that the language of Section 2.2-2448 of the Code of Virginia did not give an equally strong focus towards domestic issues. Thus, during the 2004 session of the General Assembly, the Code of Virginia was amended to clarify that VAAB's jurisdiction expressly includes issues affecting Asian American communities in the Commonwealth in addition to those involving relations between Virginia and Asian nations.

The revised Code Section 2.2-2448, along with the rest of the authorizing statute (§§ 2.2-2448 to 2.2-2451) is stated in its entirety in the 2004 VAAB Annual Report, which is located at: [www.vaab.virginia.gov](http://www.vaab.virginia.gov).

## **C. Board Members**

The following are the current members of the VAAB and their residence and professional affiliations:

Ranjana W. Chachra of Blacksburg is a real estate investor

Wai-Ping Chan of Alexandria is an attorney in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Civil Rights

Liu-Jen C. Chu of Richmond is a community advocate and a former chair of the Asian American Society of Central Virginia

Robert O. Colorina of Chesapeake is a director with American Industrial Corporation

Conrado B. "Dick" Dabu of Norfolk is a U.S. Navy veteran and former chairman of the Filipino Culture Center

Nalin Jain of Fairfax is the director of the Arlington Small Business Development Center, George Mason University

Manbir "Manny" Kathuria of Fairfax is founder and president of International Business Systems, Inc.

Mark L. Keam of Vienna is chief counsel to U.S. Senator Richard J. Durbin on the Senate Judiciary Committee

Rafat Mahmood of Alexandria is a real estate developer

Thomas W. McCandlish of Richmond is a partner with the law firm of McCandlish and Holton

Krittika Onsanit of Richmond is an international student and internship advisor at the University of Richmond

Silvia Y. Patton of Fairfax Station is president of Fairview Park Florist and chair of the Organization of Korean-American Women, Inc.

Ravi Prasad of Richmond is president of Sri Balaji Corporation, Prasad Associates, Inc., and OM & OM Management, and the current Chair of the Asian American Society of Central Virginia.

Dilip Sarkar of Suffolk is a vascular surgeon and associate professor of surgery at Eastern Virginia Medical School

Francis M. Stevens of Petersburg is a retail manager and former member of the Petersburg City Council

Leon R. Wang of Norfolk is professor emeritus and former chairman of the civil engineering department at Old Dominion University

The current Board also includes the following cabinet secretaries as ex officio members:

Secretary Michael J. Schewel of the Department of Commerce and Trade

Secretary Belle S. Wheelan of the Department of Education

Secretary Jane H. Woods of the Department of Health and Human Resources

The Board is assisted by Rupa Somanath, a staff member of the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth. In addition, Amy Kim, Minority Business Outreach Liaison, from the Virginia Department of Business Assistance has ex officio status.

#### **D. Board Committees**

VAAB created the following three committees, each with several Board members, to carry out its duties in a more efficient manner:

Civic and Cultural Committee. Chaired by Wai-Ping Chan, this committee's goals are to address the Asian American communities' concerns by; increasing their awareness of the Commonwealth government's services and programs, promoting the increase of Asian American participation in these activities, and



working in partnership with community-based organizations to carry out these goals.

Education and Learning Committee. Chaired by Manbir Kathuria, this committee's goals are to study and propose recommendations on issues of education and learning affecting the Asian American communities. The term, "education," covers the entire spectrum of the formal educational, including PreK-12, post secondary (two and four year), and advanced graduate and professional studies. The term, "learning," refers to the spectrum of lifelong learning opportunities, including continuing education, professional training, and diversity education at the workplace.

Business and Trade Committee. Chaired by Nalin Jain, this committee's goals are to research, gather, and examine available data on Asian Americans who own or operate their businesses in the Commonwealth and/or with Asian nations to determine whether the Commonwealth is providing a healthy environment for these businesses to succeed domestically and internationally.

### **III. BOARD ACTIVITIES FOR 2004-2005**

#### **A. Business Meetings**

VAAB held five public meetings in the operating year of 2004-2005: August 24, 2004 (Richmond), November 16, 2004 (Norfolk), February 3, 2005 (Richmond), April 5, 2005 (Richmond), and June 9, 2005 (Annandale). All meeting minutes are posted at VAAB website, [www.vaab.virginia.gov](http://www.vaab.virginia.gov)

The Board held a vote to have the annual election of the Chair and Vice Chair occur at the July meeting each year. The current Chair, Liu-Jen Chu, and the Vice-Chair, Rob Colorina continue to serve their roles until the end of this term. The new term of the Governor's appointment starts from July 1, 2005 for four years.

At each Board meeting, guest speakers representing state and local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, or other entities were invited to share information about their group. During the public comment portion of each meeting, interested members of the public were provided with opportunity to address the Board.

During 2004-2005, the following individuals were invited to speak at VAAB Board meetings:

Noreen Crowley – Assistant Secretary of Education reviewed all three Education recommendations made in 2004 VAAB annual report. She suggested these recommendations be brought to local school Boards, for their multicultural committees to develop these initiatives. (August 24, 2004)

Nancy Roberts – Deputy Secretary of Health & Human Resources was pleased to see VAAB emphasized the importance of the HJR study results and exchanged ideas with members on how to partner with health care providers from the Asian American community to address the shortage of health care providers and nurses. (August 24, 2004)

Secretary Mike Schewel – Shared the Virginia import/export data and the link of increasing imports, land investment, and port volume to the increase of Virginia revenue; he discussed ways VAAB could help Virginia trade with Asia. (August 24, 2005)

Tom McCandlish – Partner of McCandlish and Holton Law Firm and also a Board member, presented a slide show “Global Strategies” – 21<sup>st</sup> Century is the Pacific Century. (August 24, 2004)

Sarah Wu – Director with the Hong Kong Trade Office, New York, NY, shared the trade information on Hong Kong, China, and the U.S. collected from her office. (November 16, 2004)

Delegate Lionell Spruill Sr. (D-Chesapeake) Sponsored the bill to get the VAAB funding in the 2005 General Assembly session. He worked with Delegate Frank Hall in requesting the Governor to include VAAB in his budget. (November 16, 2004)

Delegate Robert Tata (R-Virginia Beach) Suggested VAAB help the community to set up an Asian Pacific American coalition. He suggested that contributions through a political action committee such as this to legislators, could be a way to increase our voice in the political process. (November 16, 2004)

Jerry Broadway, Terry Lentz, and Tom Kincaid from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership made a presentation about the structure of Virginia’s trade with Asian nations. VEDP asked VAAB to gather a list of cultural organizations that can help the new companies’ employees to acclimate to Virginia. (April 5, 2005)

Delegate Bob Hull (D-Falls Church), Spoke to the Board about his district representation and legislative impacts to immigrants after 9/11. (June 9, 2005)

Numerous Asian American community leaders have attended VAAB meetings and made comments. Their names listed are listed below:

- Eric Liang Jensen (Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans of VA (CAPAVA),
- Tinh Duc Phan and My Lan Tran (Asian American Business Assistance Center), Romy San Antonio (Filipino American Veterans of Hampton Road),

- Nony Abrajano (National Federation of Filipino American Associations - Hampton Roads, Virginia),
- Justo Manglicmot (National Federation of Filipino American Associations - Hampton Roads Chapter),
- Amarjit and Jagdish Singh (Multicultural Alliance of Virginia),
- Jackie Bong-Wright

## **B. Outreach and Publicity**

During the past year, VAAB, its members, and activities have been featured in numerous press stories. VAAB members also reached out to the Asian American community across the Commonwealth through participation and visibility at a variety of events and publications.

On November 16, 2004, the Hampton Road Board members along with the Organization of Chinese Americans – Eastern Virginia Chapter hosted an evening reception at the Uptown Buffet restaurant, Hampton, VA. This event had a full turn out and successfully connected the area legislators with the Asian American community leaders/members. VAAB was impressed by how close the area Asian Americans connected with their representatives in the General Assembly. In attendance were Delegate Kenny Alexander, Delegate Robert McDonald, Delegate Lionell Spruill, Senator Louis Lucas, Senator Yvonne Miller, Senator Nick Rerras, and Pat Harris of Senator Allen's regional office. Asian American Councilman, Ronald Villanueva, of Virginia Beach also attended and all had the opportunity to address the dinner audience.

On February 3, 2005, VAAB and CAPAVA partnered with twenty civic and business groups from the Virginia Asian American community to host the first Asian American Community Legislative and State Briefing Forum and an Asian American Legislative Reception. This event included a morning tour at the Capital, a noon-time visit to and recognition from both Senate and House sessions, an afternoon session on Policy briefings at the Library of Virginia, and a Legislative Reception in the evening at Peking Restaurant, Shockoe Slip of Richmond, VA. Over 200 people came from the Central, Eastern, Northern, and Western regions of the State. This event united the diverse Asian American community and energized its participation in the mainstream political process.

The all-day event was fully supported and funded through the contributions of: Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans of Virginia, Asian American Society of Central Virginia, Organization of Chinese Americans – VA Chapters, Vinifera Wine Growers Association, LTD Management Inc., National Congress of Vietnamese Americans, Alliance of Chinese Community Organizations of America, Organization of Korean American Women, US Sikh Chamber of Commerce, Asian American Action Fund, Korean American Society of Greater Richmond, Filipino American Association of Central Virginia, VTLS, Inc., Korean American Association of Northern Virginia, Pakistani American Society of Central Virginia, Indian Association of Virginia, Korean American Coalition – D.C. Area Chapter, Dr. Dilip Sarkar, Dr. Suchada Langley, Bill and Mayette Wilder, and Paul Shao.

During both House and Senate session, about 75 Virginians from diverse Asian ethnicities visited both galleries to see first-hand the legislative process. The groups were introduced at both sessions and were well received by the General Assembly members. Once again, Virginia Asians made their visibility to the General Assembly.

In the afternoon Policy Briefings, Bruce Jamerson from the Clerk's Office described the State legislative process. Representatives from the Majority Party caucus and Minority Party caucus each briefed on their parties and roles. VAAB staff, Rupa Somonath moderated the State Official briefings on how to access state programs and services. Presenters included Honorable Secretary Eugene Huang of Technology, Honorable Secretary Belle Wheelan of Education; Amy Kim from Department of Business Assistance; and Nancy Roberts, Deputy Secretary of Health & Human Resources. Mr. B. Newman briefed on Homeland Security and Ms. L. Challa on Immigration Law. The VAAB and audience were impressed by the well organized and informative resources given at the briefings.

In the evening reception, over 200 Asian Americans throughout Virginia and over a dozen state officials attended the reception and provided an additional forum to acquaint. Governor Warner made the opening remarks and Lt. Governor Timothy Kaine attended later. Many General Assembly members attended the event, including: Del. Kris Amundson, Del. Viola Baskerville, Del. Adam Ebbin, Del. Albert Eisenberg, Del. Frank Hall, Del. Bob Hull, Del. Bob McDonnell, Del. Brian Moran, Del. Ken Plum, Del. James Shuler, Sen. Creigh Deeds, Sen. Janet Howell, Sen. Steve Martin, Sen. Russ Potts, Sen. Patsy Ticer, and the Deputy Secretary of Commerce & Trade, Matt Erskine, Kelly Thomasson from the Office of the Governor. General Assembly members represented by their staffers were: Del. Vincent Callahan, Del. Phillip Hamilton, Del. Chap Peterson, Del. Leo Wardrup by Jack Hilgers, Sen. Nick Rerras by Dan Heyworth, and Sen. Frank Ruff. Many Asian American leaders got the opportunity to meet with their representatives and ideas and concerns were exchanged. The unity demonstrated among the Asian ethnic communities and the strong connections between the Asian American communities with their legislators instilled a lasting impression among all who attended.

News about this all-day event was covered in several print media such as the *Richmond Times Dispatch*, *Roanoke Times & World News*, *Virginian-Pilot*, and the *Washington Post*. Several Board members have had their personal profiles featured in local ethnic media, including Asian-language publications.

#### **IV. ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

As Governor Warner's current administration nears completion, the Virginia Asian Advisory Board looks back at its service in the last two years. The Board began its first announcement gathering in June 2003 at Tidewater, Virginia. They met to discuss the role the Virginia Asian Advisory Board could have throughout the Commonwealth.

In the past two years, the Virginia Asian Advisory Board has partnered with many local cultural and business organizations to help the community and our elected officials understand the needs of the Asian American community. VAAB has also invited officials from various

local, state, and international economic development agencies at its Board meetings, to learn and find out how to assist trade opportunities between Virginia and the Asian nations.

In 2002, Governor Warner cancelled a trip to South Asia due to the budgetary constraints that restricted Virginia when he was elected to office. VAAB did recommend that he reinstate that Trade Mission when it became fiscally possible. In 2003 the Governor traveled to China for a seven-day Trade Mission with the Virginia Department of Economic Development and members from the Asian business community. The Mission was highly successful, and an economic bridge to China is still being cultivated.

In May 2004, VAAB held a public forum in conjunction with the Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans of Virginia in Northern Virginia. The one-day forum brought out community members and elected officials alike. House of Delegates member, Vivian Watts and others came to listen to the needs of the Asian community. The panel consisted of various Asian health care representatives dealing specifically with language barriers, state employees in the education system who had seen discriminatory practices, and business owners that were having trouble with licensing issues with the State. Over 60 people from around the community came out to listen and learn from the panelists.

In November, 2004, VAAB extended outreach to the Asian American communities from the Hampton Road area and got to know their members and several of their issues of concerns. VAAB Board members enjoyed meeting with the area legislators and were very impressed by the close connections between the area Asian American community leaders with their legislators.

In February 2005, the Board held the first Asian American Community Legislative and State Briefing Forum in Richmond, Virginia. This time the audience came to hear experts in state education, technology and business procurement, legislative process, and immigration laws. Over 60 people have attended the briefing made by legislators, and various Secretariats for Governor Warner's administration, such as Eugene Huang, Secretary of Technology and Belle Wheelan, the Secretary of Education. In the evening, VAAB and CAPAVA along with about 20 other organizations hosted a legislative reception. Over 200 people from the Asian community around the Commonwealth and about half of the legislators in Richmond have got to know one another better. Governor Warner's address to the crowd insisted that this is only the beginning of a long relationship between Asian Americans in Virginia and elected officials.

VAAB also recommended that Governor Warner continue to foster trade between Asian nations. In April 2005, Governor Warner traveled to Japan and India. At the request of the Asian Advisory Board, Governor Warner has proclaimed May as Asian Heritage Month throughout his administration. He continues to reach out to the Asian community and has asked over 100 Virginia Asians to serve on various boards and commissions in his Administration. The VAAB has supported this effort by helping to recommend qualified candidates from every region of the Commonwealth.

As the Asian Advisory Board continues to learn from presenters at each meeting, whether the subjects are economic, education, or cultural exchanges, the members are continuously going back to their community and sharing these lessons with them. As the VAAB moves forward, it

is committed to creating an open door to state government and the people it serves. Currently, there is an Asian Resource database in progress along with the willingness to pair with other organizations so their message can reach the fast growing Asian population in Virginia. It is the hope of VAAB that these relationships will continue to flourish and further the accomplishments of the Asian community across the Commonwealth.

## **V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Through the work of the three committees and information gathered from the public, VAAB has identified the following issues to be the most important and urgent for the Governor and executive branch agencies to act upon in the coming months.

### **A. Education and Learning Committee Recommendations**

**I) PreK-12 Public Education:** From the Standard of Learning (SOL) test results we may conclude that the average performance of Virginia K-12 students on all subjects for all grades has been improving in recent years. However, inadequate attention has been placed on the students who scored at either ends of the spectrum. To raise the standard of public education, both the gifted and remedial programs in Virginia Public Schools needs to be strengthened.

**A) Remedial Programs** - Some new immigrants/refugees, African Americans, and those with learning disabilities are still being left behind. As the Asian population in the Commonwealth grows at a faster rate, the English as Second Language (ESL) program in the state need to be strengthened.

***Recommendation:*** *The committee recommends that the Commonwealth allocate adequate resources to develop and sustain such remedial programs in public schools. Teacher training resources for ESL programs should be emphasized.*

**B) Gifted Programs** - At the same time, gifted programs for talented students to excel, including the Governor's School for the gifted, in Virginia are very limited. This is an unfortunate loss to the Commonwealth and to the nation. In most international competitions, the US team performs poorly much of the time. We should strengthen public schools in general, and the Governor's School for the gifted specifically, on programs for the talented in all areas including science, math, art, sports, music, etc., in order to bring our students up to at least a competitive level with children of other nations.

***Recommendation:*** *The committee recommends that the Commonwealth increase budget allocation significantly to broaden the Governor's School's gifted programs and to assist/enhance other public schools with complementary gifted/specialty programs.*

- C) **Foreign Language Electives** – Spanish and French have been the most common foreign language electives in public schools. However, Asian economies are growing rapidly and Asian countries are becoming major U.S. trading partners. An example of the increasing relevance of Asian language instruction in education is that the College Board in Princeton implemented an Advanced Placement (AP) course and examination in Chinese language in December 2003. In some nationally conducted surveys the number of students expressing interest in learning Chinese as a second language was more than ten times expected (source: PBS radio broadcast). This is a broad national trend. Asian languages should be offered as foreign language electives in public schools in order to offer the students the skills to communicate in a global environment. This enhanced language selection will more adequately serve Virginia's needs in business, commerce, travel, education and scientific exchange. In Hampton Roads, by popular demand, the Virginia Beach School Board has approved Tallwood High School to start "The Global Studies Academy" in the Fall 2005 that will include Chinese and Arabic languages in the curriculum.

***Recommendation:*** *The committee recommends that the Commonwealth offer a special grant for initiating Asian language courses in public schools where the demand for this language exists.*

- D) **Textbook Selection** – There are two major issues for the public school textbook selections: (1) Textbook selections are highly influenced by a few large states such as California, Texas, and Florida. Nationwide, textbooks are supplied basically by only four large publishers with volumes at around 4.3 billion dollars a year (see commentary by Washington Post staff Jay Mathews -March 22, 2005, at the following link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A56501-2005Mar22>). As such, large publishers, which have spent a lot of lobbying money, practically need only to satisfy the Adoption Committees' demands or philosophy of these few large states. Some of these textbooks are poorly written without taking into account the improvements in the students' performances over the time. On the other hand, some innovative and excellent textbooks from small publishers are not able to get to the adoption consideration pool. Virginia State Board of Education (VSBE) regulates the textbook selection and adoption and reviews and maintains an adoption list once in six years. It is important that VSBE, with internal and outside qualified experts, review and select textbooks from either large or small publishers to alleviate the monopolistic, stagnant situation. Before adoption, VSBE should solicit teacher feedback, publisher comments, and parents' input. (2) Some social and history textbooks have very little or no coverage on Asian or Asian American history. Without thorough reviews by qualified experts, some history textbooks may miss important facts, or contain significantly inaccurate descriptions of them in Asian or Asian American history and culture. For example, a recent discussion (private communications from an Indian American community) on world history textbook adoption for Fairfax County contained inaccurate facts about Hindu Religion/Thought. Therefore, it is necessary that qualified reviewers on the subjects are included to

review the textbooks before official adoption. In reference to Asian and Asian-American history, culture, religion, and heritage, VAAB will be able to provide constructive roles in the review process when requested. In addition, all social studies teachers should be given a supplementary training about Asian American history, Asian history, geography, political structure, faith/culture/religious traditions, etc.

***Recommendation:*** *The committee recommends that before textbook adoption, the Commonwealth's Textbook and Selection and Adoption Committee should allow big and small publishers to submit their book for experts' review and comments, and collect feedback and input from teachers, and parents on topics that related to Asia and Asian language, history, culture, religion and heritage. There should be funding for teachers in social studies courses to take supplementary training about Asian American history, Asian history, geography, political structure, culture/religion traditions, etc.*

- E) Diversity and Multiculturalism** - Teaching diversity and multiculturalism is more effective at early ages. President George H. W. Bush designated May to be Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in May 1990. May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants. Since then, numerous Asian heritage celebrations organized by local Asian American communities have been held in many places in the country. To help broaden the learning of diversity and multiculturalism, it would be more effective to hold the celebrations in public schools. During the month of May, schools are encouraged to hold special Asian or Asian-American focused activities where students will learn about Asian American history, food, dress, fashions, dance, music, customs and arts and crafts from Asian countries. This is a fun way of learning about other cultures. Parents can help in the effort. Speakers from different communities may be asked to have interactive lessons in the classes.

***Recommendation:*** *The Committee recommends that the Governor designate the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May as Asian American Heritage Enhancement or Education Week in Public Schools.*

## **II) College Education and Advanced Studies**

- A) Equal Opportunity for Asian-American Faculty in Higher Education** – Most Asian Americans who have obtained doctoral degrees in the fields of science, engineering, and medicine, have gone into academic and research institutions to teach and to do research. The 2002 census data showed that APAs (Asian Pacific Americans) with advanced degrees in doctorates, masters, and bachelors per thousand persons were at 39.4%, which was much higher than those of Whites (24.5%), Blacks (14%), and Hispanics (8.3%). However, there has been evidence



in the past that when it comes to salaries and executive/managerial positions, APA's share is much lower than those of any other race. To objectively assess this issue, statistical analyses on faculty employment data should be conducted to help understand the current situation in Virginia public higher education institutions. As the first step, appropriate statistical data on APA's salary, rank, and administrative position are critically needed for analyses. The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) does not currently collect any statistical data on faculty salary and administrative appointments based on race. This issue has been raised in the last year's report. We want to reiterate the importance of such a data collection task and rectify the situation.

***Recommendation:*** *The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth allot an appropriate budget for VAAB or require SCHEV to collect statistical data on faculty salary and administrative appointments by rank, race and ethnicity, national origin, gender, and any other relevant factors within the Commonwealth's public colleges and universities. The situation of less salary should be corrected as soon as possible. In addition, all faculties, regardless of race, must be provided equal opportunities in promotion to administrative positions.*

- B) Student Exchange Program-** International student exchange programs can enhance diverse educational experiences and promote cultural enrichment and mutual understanding through people-to-people contacts. Establishing Sister City and Sister School programs can also be beneficial.

***Recommendation:*** *The Committee recommends that the Governor's office establish scholarships for international students to study at Virginia colleges and universities and for Virginia students to study abroad. Strategic countries for exchange of students are Asian countries. To help rebuild war torn countries, special attention could be given to Afghanistan and Iraq students.*

- C) Visiting Scholars Program –** United States has the most sophisticated facilities in the world for scholars to learn and to excel. Many scholars from lesser-developed countries are willing to come to the U. S. to do research and to study with nominal compensation. It would be advantageous to attract them to Virginia. These talented foreign scholars can effectively help Virginia academic and research institutions develop and advance business, engineering, medical, and scientific products and programs significantly at low cost.

***Recommendation:*** *The Committee recommends that the Governor's office establish budget for international scholars to teach or perform research at Virginia colleges and universities. The State should coordinate with INS office to ease the process for them to secure Visas to come to the U.S.*

- III) Community and Adult Educational Programs –** Diversity brings quality. In the age of globalization, especially in America, diversity has to play a significant role. In

this predominantly-immigrant country, to reduce hate crimes due to misunderstanding, and to create a harmonious and rich multi-cultural life for all in America, educational programs to introduce various ethnic historical and cultural backgrounds will be very beneficial and absolutely necessary. Diversity and multiculturalism are inescapable facts of life and it is to everyone's benefit to learn and to deal with it effectively. Diversity and cultural sensitivity training should not be something that corporations and government agencies engage in only when they are facing legal problems. Rather, such training ought to be part of lifelong learning of adult education, vocational & technical training and general education for every Virginia resident. Again, VAAB offers its assistance in promoting such goals.

***Recommendation: The Committee urges the Governor to officially recognize diverse cultural and religious holidays and encourage the development and adoption of diversity training curriculum in the Commonwealth's public schools and in executive branch agency training programs.***

## **B. Civic And Cultural Committee**

- I) **Limited English Proficiency (LEP)** - One of the finding of the different hearings during 2004-2005, is that the community is concerned that state government agencies are not responsive to the Asian American community needs. There appears to be a disconnection between the government officials who administer the programs and the community who needs the services. This is highlighted by the limited English proficiency in many of the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities.

The State Legislature in March of 2004 passed a joint resolution known as HJR 71, which requires the Secretary of Health and Human Resources to develop plans for increasing awareness of meaningful access to information and services in the Department of Health and Human Resources. The legislation took note that the 2000 U.S. census recorded more than 570,000 foreign-born residents are residing in the Commonwealth, and that the proportion of non-English speaking speakers has increased to 10.8 percent. It further took note that under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, recipients of Federal funding are prohibited to discriminate based on race, color, and national origin.

Pursuant to the legislative mandate under HJR 71, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources has formed a HJR Working Group consisted of members of the HHR officials. It held various meetings last fall and VAAB members assisted in the discussions and advised the Working Group. As a result, HHR produced a Report to the General Assembly on November 30, 2004. The report contains several recommendations to the General Assembly with supporting statistics.

In this report, HHR has interpreted the HJR 71 as having four major components. It requires the Agencies to (1) make recommendations for developing a plan for increasing the awareness of the requirements to provide meaningful access to

information and services in the Secretariat for LEP individuals; (2) identify, prioritize, and estimate the costs of translating significant information and documents used by agencies and service providers; (3) determine Federal resources available to assist service providers in efforts to serve this population; and (4) identify options for obtaining translation services with consideration to quality and technical accuracy of the translation.

The total number of the self identified LEP from the 2000 Census of Asian languages is 37,986 statewide. It is also noted that this may be under reported since most newly arrived Asian immigrants either did not participate in the census or simply did not provide accurate information. VAAB is actively working with the HJR 71 Working Group to assure that Asian languages are included in its effort to translate various official documents for the public.

***Recommendation:*** *The committee urges the Governor to implement HJR 71 to the fullest extent of the legislation and require that each of the State agency to work with the Department of Health and Human Resources to increase the accessibility of state services to the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. VAAB will continue to provide substantial support and assistance. The number of increased assistance requests made by Asian American community members is a measurement of increasing agency effort under HJR 71.*

- II) **Civil participation in Virginia Government** - In a case decided by the U.S. Supreme Court, *Reynold v. Simm*, it was held that voting is a fundamental right of an American citizen. Also under the Voting Rights Act of 1965, no one can be denied to vote because of race and national origin. The Board finds that while most members of Asian American communities are diligent and hard working citizens in the U.S. and in the Commonwealth, many of them nevertheless had not been exercising this right for various reasons. As shown by many studies and surveys, language is one of the main obstacles toward voting, and fear of authority is another. For the past elections, be it Federal or state wide, low Asian American turnouts were common. Many community organizations have provided voter's registration drives and candidates' forums in an effort to increase Asian Americans' participation in voting, regardless of party affiliation. The Board also finds that election procedures are cumbersome and inherently dissuade all voters, not only AAPIs. As the Governor signed HB 2412, HB 2415, and HB 1847 during past April in order to reduce some of the regulatory burden and to increase due process rights to all voters in Virginia, it is essential that the Governor also to take this issue to the AAPI communities.

***Recommendations:*** *The committee recommends: (1) The Governor to form a task force addressing the voting issues of Asian Americans, and to direct the Board of Elections in conjunction with HJR 71 to translate documents and to provide additional education on the election process to the Asian American community by working more closely with its community based organizations. (2) The Governor to request election monitors from the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division*

*to assure that Asian Americans are not denied the right to vote because of language barriers or other prohibited factors.*

- III) **Budget** – In order for VAAB to carry out all the goals and activities in an effective manner, it is critical that it be provided an adequate budget and staff support. Delegate Lionell Spruill and Frank Hall along with Senator Howell recognized the importance of adequately financing the board. However, their proposed bills did not pass the 2005 General Assembly session. It is very important to have a budget and sufficient staff supports to carry out the critical issues and tasks. We strongly encourage the administration to take appropriate action to allocate sufficient funding to support the board's duties.

**Recommendation:** *The committee recommends the Governor to set a budget aside for a full time staff, travel, and incident costs to support the work of VAAB for 2005-2006.*

### C. Business & Trade Committee

- D) **Increasing Small Business Participation in State Contracting** - According to the 1997 Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprise Report, Virginia is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states in the number of Asian American firms. There are 22,441 firms owned by Asian Americans accounted for 5 percent of all firms in Virginia and generated \$4.4 billion of gross receipts. Compared to the 1992 Survey, the number of Asian American firms in Virginia rose 63 percent. By comparison, nationally the number of minority-owned businesses rose 30 percent during that time.

In recognition of growing contribution of Asian American business, the Commonwealth has been making consistent efforts to diversify its supply chain to include more minority vendors. From 1997 to 2002, minority businesses received 0.44 percent of Virginia's contracts. Subsequently, minority businesses' share of state contracts rose to 1.57 percent in 2003 and during the first quarter of 2004, 2.55 percent of state contracts were awarded to minority vendors. The Commonwealth should step up efforts to make more minority vendors aware of the benefits of certification and business opportunities with the state.

**Recommendations:** *The committee urges the Governor to (1) strengthen and establish programs to enhance the economic viability of minority-owned businesses (including, but not limited to, Asian American businesses) that include training on public as well as private procurement opportunities, a mentoring-protégé program, and looking into ways to simplify the procurement process. (2) In addition, the procurement program needs to be monitored and evaluated to assess the real economic impact on the Asian American businesses through the State's procurement program.*

- II) **Governor Warner's Trade Mission to Japan/India** – In April of 2005, Governor Warner went to Asia for a Trade Mission, primarily to Japan & India. Governor Warner extended an invitation to all members of the Asian Advisory Board to accompany him as part of the Virginia Delegation to Delhi, Bangalore, and Mumbai in India. His objective was to create better trade & business opportunities between businesses of the Commonwealth and the Asian countries. To develop and explore business opportunities, VAAB members have extended their assistance to VEDP and the Office of the Governor to help plan future trade missions. The Board has agreed to assist businesses around the Commonwealth reach out into Asian economies to help Virginia succeed in a global economy. We can do this by providing contacts for successful businesses in our homelands, reaching out to businesses that are moving into the U.S. market and directing them to VEDP to learn the benefits of Virginia's economic environment and help them choose Virginia as the location for their U.S. subsidiary. Lastly, VAAB has agreed to help acclimatize businesses relocating to Virginia by introducing the Asian businesses to their new communities. For more information on either of these trips, Governor Warner's trips to China in 2004, or upcoming Trade Missions to Asian countries, please contact Virginia Economic Development Partnership at [www.yesvirginia.org](http://www.yesvirginia.org).

***Recommendations:*** VAAB was proud that Governor Warner followed through with our recommendation from the 2004 report and we request that more Virginia Trade Missions are planned to foster and strengthen the economic ties with Asian countries. In addition, the Commonwealth should continuously evaluate what incentives are offered to foreign investors so that we remain competitive.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

Over the past two years, VAAB has been active in building a bridge between the State Government and the Asian American community. We are pleased that the Commonwealth recognizes the importance and potential of this community and has taken steps to increase communication and tailor services to their needs.

Through our active community outreach and research activities, we have identified a number of issues and recommendations within our three subcommittees: Education and Learning; Civic and Cultural; and Business and Trade. Each of these areas is critical to enhancing the quality of life of the Commonwealth's citizens and developing their potential to the fullest so that they can contribute meaningfully to Virginia. We encourage the Governor and General Assembly to review our recommendations and develop policies to support them.

We appreciate this opportunity to have served the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Asian American Community. We hope the future VAAB members continue this important work for the benefit of all Virginians.